

DRAFT MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of NETTLECOMBE PARISH COUNCIL
held on MONDAY 13th MAY 2019 at THE EMN HALL – 8.00 pm

Correspondence and other documents were available from 7.30 pm for Councillors to read prior to the meeting.

PRESENT: Cllrs Marilyn Crothers (Chair), Oliver Reynolds, Iain Mackie, Liz Scott, and Carol Juffs (Clerk)
SCCllr Christine Lawrence and Somerset West & Taunton Cllr Marcus Kravis arrived during the proceedings having been at other Parish Council meetings.

IN ATTENDANCE: No residents present

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr Ben Lintott and Cllr Robin Wichard

2. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Chairman: Cllr Reynolds proposed that Cllr Crothers be re-elected, seconded by Cllr Mackie, carried unanimously.

Vice-Chairman: Cllr Scott proposed that Cllr Lintott be re-elected, seconded by Cllr Reynolds, carried unanimously.

Committee responsibilities:

Planning: Cllr Mackie

Highways: Cllr Lintott

Footpaths: Cllr Wichard

3. **ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE FORMS**

Cllr Crothers and Cllr Lintott signed the acceptance of office forms.

Financial and Other Interest forms will be emailed to the Councillors to be completed by next meeting

4. **REVIEW:**

SALC – technical difficulties have meant SALC membership details will not be available until about August. It was agreed that the membership would be continued providing there was not a large increase in the subscription. Clerk to circulate details prior to next meeting for approval to pay.

Churchyard maintenance: Simon Passmore is stepping down after seventeen years of loyal service and the Councillors record their heartfelt thanks for his work and dedication.

The churchwarden has recommended Derek Quartly who cuts the churchyard, and his tender has been received by the Clerk. In the interim he has offered to cut the graveyard next Wednesday to keep the grass under control. The Clerk is to contact James Parker and invite him to tender, as he was interested previously. The details will be emailed to Councillors for a decision to be taken ahead of next meeting, as the mowing season is underway.

Yearly Charity Donations: It was unanimously agreed to support the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance and Exmoor Search and Rescue at £50.00 each charity.

5. **SUMMARY REPORTS: APRIL 2018 – MARCH 2019**

Chairman's Report (MC)

The Parish Council had held 4 regular meetings during the year and the occasional extraordinary meeting to discuss planning issues which could not wait until the next Council meeting.

Exmoor National Park meetings have been attended with the focus on needs of Young people – housing, transport and employment were all highlighted.

Dunster Panel meetings were attended, held at West Somerset Offices bringing local issues to the attention of Councillors, Police, Fire service and the Somerset Highways.

There was wide disapproval of a solar panel farm proposal between Danesfield and Old Cleeve First School and the Chairman attended an exhibition at Danesfield School.

An in-depth update of the Electoral Revue of Somerset West and Taunton District Council was attended in June last year. Also a seminar on Planning Regulations was attended by the Chairman, Clerk and Cllr Mackie which was very informative

Other Parish Matters:

The annual fete raised £3327.50 which was marginally up on the previous year, and was held in and around Nettlecombe church.

In August the PCC hosted a Pimms and cream tea event in the Church to thank all parishioners for their help and support during the year.

The Parish Supper was held in January 2019 by kind invitation of the Field Centre and their caterer did the usual amazing meal ably supported by the Apple Pie makers in the parish!

On 23rd January 2019 interviews were held for the role of Parish Clerk and Carol Juffs was appointed to take up the role in April, on the retirement of the present Clerk Mary Coles.

The Chairman gave grateful thanks and was sorry to say goodbye to Mary Coles, who had a depth of experience, knowledge and a good sense of Parish affairs that ensured matters ran smoothly over the years. The Councillors are all eternally grateful for her many years of service.

The Chairman thanked the district councillors for their support through the year and was sorry that we have to say farewell to them following the local elections held on May 2nd 2019.

Councillor Nick Machin resigned during the year and the Council is currently seeking to co-opt a new councillor.

The Chairman thanked the parish councillors for their hard work and dedication in a particularly onerous year for planning applications and associated problems – Iain Mackie has been a tower of strength.

The Councillors remain the same as the previous year with Ben Lintott (Vice-Chair) leading Highways, Iain Mackie dealing with planning applications, Robin Wichard monitoring footpaths, and all ably supported by Oliver Reynolds and Liz Scott providing valuable back-up.

Clive Thorne continues to run the Nettlecombe website www.nettlecombewestsomerset.life

Anna Thomas will continue to be our liaison officer in regard to the EMN Hall and its activities, for which we are very grateful.

IT equipment was purchased during the year and will be used by the new parish clerk.

The Chairman concluded by thanking everyone for the support she had received during her year in office.

Report from Somerset County Cllr Christine Lawrence

It was recognised that this had been an incredibly busy year with a lot of challenges to be met by Somerset County Council. Finance had been a major concern and some staffing costs and financial cuts were made in most services except Children's work.

Cuts to salting routes were recognised as not a popular move and now that the books are balanced it was hoped that they would return. More Gully work was being carried out currently in the villages and any blockages need to be reported.

Further funds have been put into Children's services to meet the ever increasing need. There is still a recruitment of foster parents needed for a caring home for children who cannot, for whatever reason, live with their birth parents.

Adult Social Care services have made some important changes to the Home First work. This means helping older people to return home after a stay in hospital. Providing they have support they need and some service provision like physiotherapy or nursing care too. It is well documented that people get stronger and feel better if able to return home and sleep in the comfort of their own home.

Public Health has re-introduced Health Visitors back into the team from the NHS to care for 1 – 5 year olds and pregnant mothers. There is currently a focus on education of non-smoking in pregnancy.

There is still more work regarding Broadband in some rural areas but progress and further Government funding is now being made available.

Cllr Mackie asked about future provision for schools – there are two new Special Needs Schools being built with pools for joint care. The programme ensures every child gets the best possible schooling. It was recognised that rural schools needed supporting, and the knock on effect from lack of affordable housing encouraging the next generation to settle in the area.

Planning: Cllr Mackie reported on the overlap of policy between the local council and Exmoor National Park and applications had been dealt with case by case through the year. **Slade House** had submitted amended plans virtually identical except for the driveway entrance as there was a tree protection order placed on a specific tree giving rise to alterations to the access. Minor changes to the Porch, and roof cover of the car port to be similar to the stable block.

Highways: Cllr Lintott was not able to attend the meeting, However, it was noted that there was still a problem with drainage at Vempletts Cross and Cllr Scott reported that Nettlecombe Park road was still an issue, the drain is still blocked.

Footpaths: Cllr Wichard was not able to attend the meeting

6. DATES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS FROM MAY 2019 – MAY 2020

Monday August 12th

Monday November 11th

Monday February 10th

Monday May 11th

7. ANY MATTERS RISING FROM THE ABOVE

There were no matters arising.

8. MINUTES of the meeting 11th February 2019 having been circulated previously were agreed and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

Comments:

Yarde post box still missing

Appointment of the Parish Clerk – Carol Juffs took up the post in April

Planning – Blade Mill, Yarde According to his own schedule the resident has one week to finish the work – to be completed by May 20th, but Planning Consent gives July 3rd as deadline. Cllr Mackie to write to Planning Officer and ask about the progress and can they confirm why he is not proceeding.

Clerk's Salary agreed at the hourly rate of £9.77 per hour (SCP 15) at 2 hours per week for first three months, then to be reviewed.

Updating and Revision of Parish Plan – decision not worth additional cost to re-print. Keep Website up to date, and it is available on line.

9. POLICE REPORT

There had not been a report received from the Police recently.

Cllr Reynolds noted that there was a spate of tradesmen's vans being broken into locally, even during daylight. Break-ins to outbuildings were also on the increase again.

10. OPEN FORUM – FOR ALL RESIDENTS

There were no residents in attendance.

11. SOMERSET WEST & TAUNTON COUNCILLORS' REPORT

Cllr Marcus Kravis was recently appointed in the local elections in early May and was ensuring they represented local parish councils swiftly. Frederika Smith was elected as Leader and Ben Allan as Deputy Leader. He invited Councillors to contact him direct with concerns. He already understood the frustration and concerns that plans were no longer being sent out with details of planning applications and suggested writing to express our concerns to the Planning department.

It is now a big Ward with just the two councillors to represent the area, and they will endeavour to attend all the meetings.

12. MATTERS OF REPORT

Councillor Vacancy – the Chairman had been approached by Martin Dewdney (former WS Cllr) who wished to join the Parish Council. He resides in Higher Washford Farm, Washford within two miles of the parish boundary, thus meeting the criteria.

Proposed by Cllr Mackie and Seconded by Cllr Reynolds.

Connecting Devon and Somerset – no report as Cllr Lintott normally receives the updates. It was agreed that there were still Broadband concerns in areas of the Parish.

13. CORRESPONDENCE

1. **Mowing Contract** Clerk to write and thank him for his hard work and heartfelt thanks when he sends his account.
2. **Volunteers to serve on Exmoor National Park** – no interest expressed,
3. **West Somerset Flood Group** requires members. Yarde has flood risks and it would be ideal to have residents from Yarde in the group. Chairman will approach them.
4. **Somerset West and Taunton Planning** correspondence – strong concerns that no plans are being sent out with application correspondence. Widespread concern about this apparent cost-cutting exercise, but hard to view detail on-line.
5. **Rural Worker and Succession Farm Dwellings – ENP**, circulated prior to the meeting by email.
6. **CIL Tax** – Community Infrastructure Levy not had in West Somerset but could add an up-front cost to development if adopted.

14. REPORTS – CURRENT

Dunster Panel ENPA etc The Chairman had nothing to add to her report – **see Minute 5.**

Highways – nothing from Cllr Lintott

Planning – Cllr Mackie reported that Planning consent had been granted **The Old School House, Yarde** windows are being changed for heritage type windows.

Orchard House application – proposal for an outbuilding to extend their storage and stable block to the rear. The Councillors reviewed the plans, for an outbuilding that would not be seen from the road, with matching render and slates to match existing. There were no objections.

Footpaths – no report received

EMN Hall – still Anna Thomas to provide a report to the meeting.

Finance report – Clerk

The Clerk had circulated the accounts for April 2018 to March 2019 prior to the meeting. The figure brought forward to 19-20 = £3256.29

Donations agreed above.

Zurich insurance still to be advised, but a three year fixed price at £167.44 - agreed

SALC External Audit training course payment agreed £30

Fasthosts Internet Ltd £66.00 agreed retrospectively - paid timely on April 2nd.

Microsoft Office Licence for Laptop £17.99 approved

Clerk's salary agreed at £234,48 for 24 hours at £9.77 April to June incl.

Domain name 123 REG payable to Clive Thorne (paid on our behalf) £29.99 approved

ECJ Mileage claim to training course £33.30

All payments were proposed by Cllr Reynolds and seconded by Cllr Scott

Clerk to negotiate a sale of the printer, as it is an accessory and not an obligation, to Mary Coles in lieu of hours of work carried out in April/May – agreed unanimously.

The Clerk noted still struggling to get paperwork through from Natwest Bank for change to signatories.

Also a generic email Nettlecombepc@gmail.com has been set up.

15. APPROVAL OF THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Cllr Mackie proposed that this statement be signed by the Clerk and the Chairman on the members' behalf, seconded by Cllr Reynolds and agreed unanimously.

16. ADOPTION OF ACCOUNTS FOR 2018 – 2019

The accounts had been circulated prior to the meeting and Cllr Reynolds proposed that they be adopted, seconded by Cllr Mackie and carried unanimously.

17. FUTURE BUSINESS/MATTERS FOR MEMBERS; INFORMATION

Nettlecombe Fete will be held on Saturday 25th May at Nettlecombe church and in the grounds.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday August 12th